

KEEP

YOUR

HOME

FREE

FROM

POISONINGS

a publication of the

Department of National

Health & Welfare, Canada

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Good and
Drug
Directorate



HOW OFTEN HAVE YOU RISKED YOUR CHILD'S LIFE TODAY?

Ridiculous question!

Is it really?

DID YOU KNOW THAT:

- Several children are poisoned EACH DAY...
- Between 30 and 40 children DIE of poison each year...
- Half of these deaths are caused by poisons other than drugs and medicines—by so-called “common household preparations”...
- Danger of poisoning lurks in your home—in EVERY home...

... in this land of Canada? ...

DANGER

in common preparations

Not all the common household preparations you use every day are fatal—or even injurious.

Some of them, if swallowed, would merely cause violent discomfort at the worst. But many of them would be very dangerous. Most medicines are *meant* to be swallowed: they, nevertheless, should be treated with extreme care.

These hazards are magnified whenever there are small children around, for toddlers will eat anything and are, as a rule, more susceptible to poisons.

It will pay you to take stock of the items around your home which could be termed “poisonous” or “toxic”.





LET'S LOOK AT A FEW

- | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|---|--|---|----------------------|---|-------------|---|--------------|
| Medicines | — | “prescriptions”, pills, headache tablets, laxatives, ointments, liniments . . . | | | | | | |
| Cleaners | — | bleaches, solvents and cleaning fluids, oven cleaners, detergents, lye, drain cleaners, disinfectants and deodorants, waxes and polishes . . . | | | | | | |
| Paints | — | including varnishes, calcimines, thinners, turpentine, brush cleaners and paint removers . . . | | | | | | |
| Fly sprays | — | Bug killers | — | Rodent exterminators | — | Fertilizers | — | Weed killers |
| Anti-freeze | — | Lubricants | — | Acids | — | | | |
| Kerosene | — | Gasoline | — | Rust removers | — | | | |
| | | | | Car polishes | | | | |
| | | | | Glues and Cements | | | | |
| | | | | Soldering Compounds | | | | |
| | | | | Polish removers | — | Perfumes | — | Lotions |
| | | | | Alcoholic beverages | | | | |

The list is endless . . .

All are potential hazards that threaten your children . . . that bring sickness to thousands of children . . . that KILL more than 30 Canadian children each year!

Grim as this sounds, it does not tell the whole story. It is true that death occurs in only a small proportion of cases—also, that with proper treatment many recover quickly and completely. But what about the rest? What about the children who become seriously ill—even permanently disabled—because of these poisons?

Take, for example, a child who swallows kerosene. He may appear, after treatment, to be wholly out of danger, yet in a few days the doctors may again be battling for his life against

pneumonia—a frequent complication in such cases.

Or again, a child whose life had been saved even though he drank a quantity of lye might suffer from voice impairment due to damaged vocal chords, to say nothing of the scars that could be caused by the lye being spilled on his skin.

There are many other types of permanent damage that may result from poisoning.

Do you want to risk any of them?

No?

How, then, can you protect your family against accidental poisoning?

By practising the following common sense precautions:



GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

Make sure that cupboards and storage for all potentially dangerous substances are the **RIGHT KIND** and in the **RIGHT PLACES**.

This means:

- ✓ Locked cabinets for medicines.
- ✓ Locked storage in basement, garage and workshop.
- ✓ High shelves for cleaning fluids, polishes, bleaches and similar housecleaning aids.



SAFE HABITS

Develop safe habits like these:

- ✓ *When using ANY preparation:* READ THE LABEL CAREFULLY and observe cautionary instructions placed there by the manufacturer. If you have any doubts about the safety of a preparation, treat it as if it were a poison.
- ✓ *When using medicine:* Read the label and administer ONLY AS DIRECTED. Throw out all "left-over" prescriptions and all medicines whose label has been lost: a wrong guess could be fatal. Give children only medicine for which a child's dosage is indicated. Teach your child to regard medicine as such and not as "candy".
- ✓ *When answering the phone:* Carry with you or put out of harm's way any preparation that could hurt your child. Risk losing a call? Better than to risk losing your CHILD.
- ✓ *When "dry" cleaning:* Keep doors or windows open. Remember, fumes

from cleaning fluids can poison as well as ignite.

- ✓ *When housecleaning:* If you cannot watch your child every moment, at least keep an eye on the cleaners and polishes you are using: place them all in one basket and take them with you as you move about the house.
- ✓ *When your children are around:* Warn them of the dangers of the preparation you are using. Familiarize them with the package or container. Never transfer harmful substances to cups, milk bottles, pop bottles or other food containers.
- ✓ *When discarding:* Make sure children will not be able to recover medicines, hair solutions or other potent preparations from garbage cans or elsewhere.
- ✓ *When the task is done:* Put away the "tools". The sooner poisons are restored to a safe place, the less the risk of accidents.

DELAY CAN BE DEADLY

Thirty to forty Canadian kiddies die each year of poisoning, and many hundreds more are made ill.

Why?

Why, in this age of enlightened medical knowledge, cannot all these lives be saved?

All too often, the reason is DELAY . . .

in calling a doctor

in getting the victim to the hospital

in identifying the poison

in determining correct treatment.

The number of deaths and illnesses is so serious that federal and provincial health departments have established a series of poison control centres to help doctors in the diagnosis and treatment of such cases.

WHAT ARE POISON CONTROL CENTRES?

The idea behind Poison Control Centres is to have available, at central points across Canada, complete information regarding all household poisons, together with the treatment indicated in each case.

The branch of the federal government most vitally concerned—the Food and Drug Directorate of the Department of National Health and Welfare—set about compiling information and to date nearly 10,000 drugs and household preparations have been listed and cross-indexed. These lists, in the form of a handy-reference card system, are supplied to hospitals wishing to set up

Poison Control Centres, through the provincial deputy ministers of health. Since the spring of 1957, when the first one began to function, over 250 Poison Control Centres have been set up across Canada and the list is still growing.

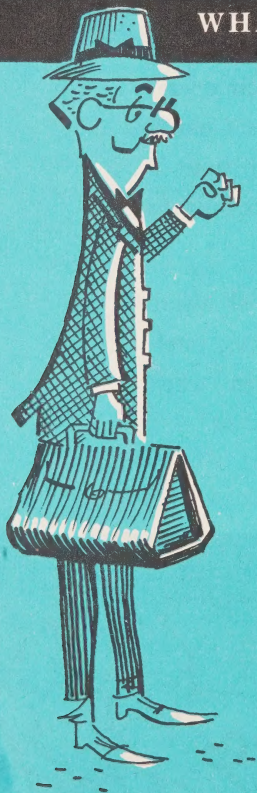
It is a simple matter now for a doctor, called in on a poisoning case anywhere in Canada, to telephone and receive, usually within minutes, all the information he needs to proceed with the treatment. As new products reach the market, the lists and the treatment cards are brought up-to-date, and new knowledge gained in the light of experience is duly recorded.

In the first six months of their operation, the services of the Poison Control Centres were used about 100 times a month, a figure which is growing as more centres open.

As the general public becomes aware of the existence of the services, intelligent action is being taken when accidents involving poison occur.



WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF POISONING



We've listed some of the precautions you should take to safeguard your children. By following these instructions you can help keep the poison toll to a minimum.

In spite of all reasonable precautions, however, ACCIDENTS HAPPEN. What can YOU do if YOUR child swallows poison?

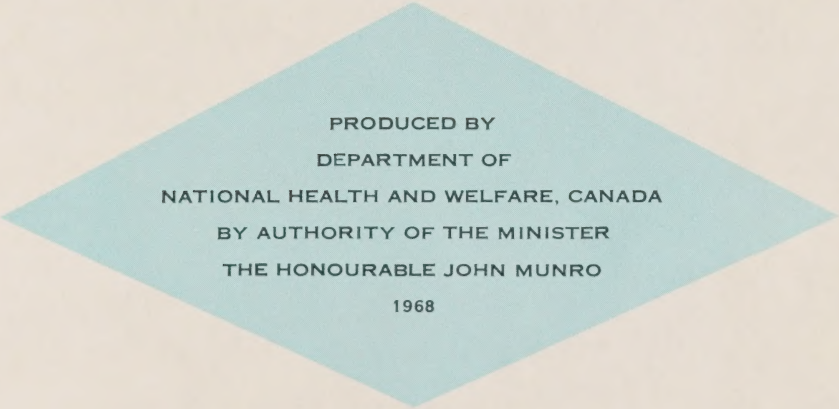
1. Call a doctor **RIGHT AWAY**. Remember—**DELAY** can be **FATAL**.
2. Tell the doctor not only what the child has swallowed, but also the brand name of the product. This ensures proper identification of the poison or poisons involved.
3. If the doctor advises it, lose no time in getting the child to the hospital.
4. Show the label or container to the doctor, or take to the hospital with the patient.
5. If you cannot locate a doctor quickly, call the emergency ward of your nearest hospital, or other emergency service in your town, such as the fire or police department.

... R E M E M B E R ...

antidotes are not the best answer—prevention is.

The phone number of the Doctor is

The phone number of the Poison Control Centre is



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